United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1513
3 November 1993

WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ General Assembly, considering need to end United States embargo against Cuba, urges States not to apply laws and measures which affect sovereignty of other States; resolution adopted by recorded vote of 88 in favour to 4 against, with 57 abstentions.

+ Special Representative Beye says UNITA accepts principle of withdrawal of its troops from territory occupied since resumption of fighting in Angola; Angolan Government reacts positively to proposal of unilateral cease-fire declaration.

+ Despite assurances of cooperation, local Serb officials impede United Nation investigation of mass grave site at Ovcara, eastern Croatia; Commission of Experts deplores delay on humanitarian grounds.

+ Secretary-General recommends that Security Council extend ONUMOZ mandate until Mozambique elections in October 1994; says new momentum has been created for implementation of General Peace Agreement.

+ Thirty-five States pledge total of $275 million on first day of 1993 Pledging Conference for Development Activities.

+ Secretary-General, in report to Security Council, says recommended expansion of UNAVEM II will cost more than $14 million for six months.

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The General Assembly today urged all States to refrain from applying laws and measures which affected the sovereignty of other States or which did not conform with their international obligations regarding the freedom of trade and navigation. The Assembly took that action by a recorded vote of 88 in favour to 4 against (Albania, Israel, Paraguay and the United States), with 57

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abstentions, as it concluded its consideration of the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba.

The Assembly urged States that had such measures to repeal or invalidate them, and asked the Secretary-General to report to it at the next regular session on the implementation of the resolution.

Also today, the Assembly unreservedly condemned the coup which had caused a brutal and violent interruption of the democratic process in Burundi. Acting without a vote, it demanded that the perpetrators put down their arms and return to their barracks and that democracy and the constitutional regime be restored immediately.

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The National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) has accepted the principle contained in Security Council resolution 864 (1993) regarding the withdrawal of its troops from territory occupied since fighting resumed in the country last year, Special Representative Blondin Beye informed the Secretary-General today. For its part, the Government of Angola had reacted positively to a proposal by Mr. Beye that it unilaterally declare a cessation of hostilities, according to a United Nations spokesman.

Those developments took place after several rounds of meetings held in Lusaka, Zambia, under the auspices of Mr. Beye. Meanwhile, the spokesman said, he was continuing his efforts to conclude an agreement on a complete cease-fire and expected that negotiations would soon resume in Lusaka.

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The investigation of a mass grave site at Ovcara, near Vukovar in eastern Croatia, has been delayed by local representatives of the self-proclaimed Serb administration in Knin in the United Nations Protected Area (UNPA) Sector East, according to the Commission of Experts examining possible war crimes in the former Yugoslavia. The Commission had received assurances of cooperation from Serb officials in Knin and in Krajina and had sent a team to begin work on the site, where as many as 200 victims of a possible mass execution had been buried.

When the team arrived, local Serb officials in Sector East created obstacles, and one stated that the investigation would have to wait until an overall political solution had been found to the situation in the former Yugoslavia. Commission Chairman Cherif Bassiouni went to Knin and was told that approval to begin work would be given by 1 November at the latest, but approval was not received by that date.

The Commission deplored the delay on humanitarian grounds, saying that identification of the remains at the grave site would alleviate the anxieties of the families of disappeared persons. Meanwhile, it was continuing field investigations in Sector West, the Medak pocket and Dubrovnik. The Commission

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pointed out that while its investigations were being prepared, the attitude of the Government of Croatia had been positive and helpful.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has recommended that the Security Council extend the mandate of the United Nations Operation in Mozambique (ONUMOZ) until elections are held there in October 1994. In a report on ONUMOZ dated 1 November, he recalled that major agreements on outstanding issues had been reached by the Government of Mozambique and the Mozambique National Resistence Movement (RENAMO) during his visit to the country last month, and said that a new momentum had been created which would facilitate implementation of the General Peace Agreement. He said that the status of ONUMOZ should be reviewed at least every three months, and that further international commitment should depend upon clear progress in implementing the Agreement, in accordance with its revised timetable.

The Secretary-General noted that fulfilling the terms of the peace agreements would impose a heavy financial burden on the Mozambican Government, and that international help would be needed in absorbing RENAMO representatives into the public administration and into society. Only $5.8 million had been contributed to the United Nations Trust Fund established in accordance with the General Peace Agreement and another $5 million would be needed. He suggested that complementary funding mechanisms might be established to help transform RENAMO into a political party, although such mechanisms would not be administered by the Organization.

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Pledges totalling more than $275 million were received from 35 countries for the development activities of the United Nations system as the two-day 1993 Pledging Conference for Development Activities opened yesterday. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) received almost $107 million, and an additional $86 million in provisional pledges. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) received pledges worth some $29 million, while $45 million was pledged for the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

Among other pledges announced yesterday were $1.1 million for the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP); $6.5 million for the United Nations International Drug Control Programme; almost $600,000 for the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women; and almost $700,000 for the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat).

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has said that expanding the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM II), as recommended by him in a report to the Security Council dated 27 October, would cost more than $14 million for a six-month period. In a further report on UNAVEM II dated

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1 November, he said that the Mission would require an extra 21 international civilian staff, 125 military observers, 42 police observers, 3 medical personnel and 37 local staff.

The Secretary-General said that should the Council approve the expansion, he would recommend to the General Assembly that the cost be considered a United Nations expense to be borne by Member States, and that the assessments levied should be credited to the UNAVEM special account.

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